

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00  
CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00  
SIL-01 USIA-06 /084 W  
-----190741Z 066936 /21

R 181801Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
TO SECSTATE WAAHDC 4674  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON  
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1025

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, PLAB, ILO, GY  
SUBJECT: ILO-BURNHAM'S COMMENTS ON POSITIONS AT ILC

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 0910 (B) GEORGETOWN 1023 (C) STATE 102699  
(D) STATE 103404

SUMMARY: DESPITE REMARKS DURING A MAY 11 SPEECH IMPLYING  
DISAGREEMENT WITH THE ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL'S DECISION TO  
"SEPARATE POLITICS" FROM THE ILO AGENDA, BURNHAM HAS  
REAFFIRMED THE ASSURANCES HIS LABOR MINISTER GAVE ME THAT  
GUYANA SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLE OF "DUE PROCESS" AND REFLECTS  
ATTEMPTS TO APPLY DOUBLE STANDARDS AT ILO PROCEEDINGS. HE  
SAID THAT THE CARIBBEAN LABOR MINISTERS REACHED AGREEMENT ON  
A COMMON APPROACH FOR USE AT THE JUNE ILC MEETING. GUYANA  
WILL NOT SEND A DELEGATION. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER REVIEWING A TAPE RECORDING OF PRIME MINISTER  
BURNHAM'S MAY 11 SPEECH OPENING THE GEORGETOWN CON-  
FERENCE OF LABOR MINISTERS, I REQUESTED A MEETING WITH  
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BURNHAM MAY 17 TO DISCUSS THE US POSITION ON ISSUES  
BEFORE THE ILC IN JUNE AND HIS REMARKS CONCERNING THE  
ILC MEETING (REF B). THE ATTITUDE UNDERLYING HIS  
REMARKS IN THE MAY 11 SPEECH APPEARED TO DIFFER FROM  
THE ASSURANCES I HAD PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED FROM MINISTERS  
GREEN AND WILLS (REF A).

2. I OPENED OUR MEETING BY REFERRING TO HIS MAY 11 SPEECH AND SAID THAT I WANTED TO PERSONALLY CLARIFY HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE US POSITION. I SAID THAT THE US RECOGNIZED THAT POLITICS AND LABOR ISSUES COULD NOT BE TOTALLY SEPARATED; HOWEVER, THE PATTERN AT ILO CONFERENCES HAD BEEN THAT SOME COUNTRIES INTRODUCED ISSUES TOTALLY EXTRANEEOUS TO THE QUESTION OF WORKER RIGHTS AND EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER RELATIONS. BURNHAM INTERRUPTED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT ISRAEL HAD BEEN ACCUSED OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ARAB WORKERS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

3. I ACKNOWLEDTED THAT ALLEGATIONS HAD BEEN MADE, AND SAID THAT DUE PROCESS HAD BEEN DENIED TO ISRAEL WHEN THE ILO HAD CONSIDERED THE MATTER AND THAT THE DENIAL OF DUE PROCESS TO SOME MEMBER STATES WAS THE ISSUE INVOLVED. I WENT ON AND REVIEWED THE BACKGROUND OF US ATTITUDE ON THE ILO AS OUTLINED IN REFS C AND D.

4. BURNHAM SAID THAT HIS SPEECH HAD BEEN INTENDED PRIMARILY AS AN INDUCEMENT TO THE CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS TO CONSIDER ILO ISSUES IN THE CONTEXT OF CARIBBEAN NEEDS. HE AGREED THAT DUE PROCESS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED AND THAT DOUBLE STANDARDS SHOULD NOT BE APPLIED IN DEALING WITH CASES INVOLVING VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE SAID HE STILL THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT THE ILO SHOULD NOT BE BARRED FROM DISCUSSING POLITICAL ISSUES, AND THAT LEGITIMATE DIFFERENCES COULD EXIST CONCERNING WHAT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR DISCUSSION AT THE ILO.  
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5. FINALLY, HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE CARIBBEAN LABOR MINISTERS HAD AGREED UPON A COMMON POSITION FOR THE JUNE ILC MEETING AND THAT THE US WOULD NOT BE UPSET BY THAT POSITION. HE HAD DECIDED THAT GUYANA WOULD NOT BE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA BECAUSE IT COULD NOT SPARE THE FUNDS TO SEND A DELEGATION.

6. COMMENT: APPARENTLY BURNHAM'S ASPERIC WORDS IN HIS MAY 11 SPEECH CONCERNING THE REPRESENTATIONS OF GREAT POWERS DID NOT SIGNAL A CHANGE IN THE POSITION DESCRIBED TO ME EARLIER BY MINISTER GREEN. RATHER BURNHAM WAS USING THE ISSUE TO URGE THE MINISTERS TO ADOPT A COMMON "CARIBBEAN" APPROACH. DURING OUR CONVERSATION, APART FROM THE RESPONSES REPORTED ABOVE, BURNHAM GAVE NO OTHER INDICATION OF HOW HE FELT ABOUT THE VARIOUS ISSUES AT THE ILO. GREEN HAS BEEN OUT OF TOWN-- APPARENTLY POLITIKING IN LINDEN--SINCE THE CONCLUSION OF THE LABOR MINISTERS MEETING LAST WEEKEND. I INTEND

TO FOLLOW-UP WITH HIM CONCERNING DETAILS OF THE  
CARIBBEAN MINISTERS' COMMON POSITION.  
BLACKEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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